

IN THE CLAIMS

Cancel claims 6 to 8 and add the following new claim 9: ✓

9. (new) A gear wheel construction for belt conveyor devices, said gear construction including a multiplicity of teeth, each formed by a pair of adjoining contacting half teeth, comprising a first gear wheel portion, including a first plurality of first half teeth, each tooth of said first plurality of first half teeth tooth defines a first half tooth flank, a second gear wheel portion including a second plurality of second half teeth, each tooth of said second plurality of second half teeth defines a second half tooth flank, adjustable coupling means for rotatively coupling said first and second gear wheel portions, said adjustable coupling means comprising radially displaceable screw means engaging in corresponding threaded recesses formed in said first gear wheel portion and aligned through enlarged recesses formed in said second gear wheel portion, said first half teeth defining first outer flank tooth surfaces and said second half teeth defining second outer tooth flank surfaces, wherein, as said first gear wheel portion is coupled to said second gear wheel portion, said first outer tooth flank surfaces and second outer tooth flank surfaces are brought to a mutually facing contacting relationship, thereby each first flank of said first half teeth of said first plurality of said first teeth will contact a respective second flank of said second half teeth of said second plurality of second half teeth to provide a single tooth of said gear wheel construction, and thereby said first and second gear wheel portions are rotatively adjustable to move away said first and second outer tooth flank surfaces.

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REMARKS

In paragraph 2 of the Office Action, claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that the applicant regards as the invention.

Reconsideration is requested.

Claims 6 to 8 have been canceled, and new claim 9 has been submitted to clearly distinguish Applicant's invention over the prior art. New claim 9 points out that the half teeth have flank surfaces which can be mutually brought into contact and each pair of half teeth define an individual tooth of the gear wheel construction. A proper antecedent basis has been provided for the claim elements. For this reason, it is requested that this ground of rejection be withdrawn.

In paragraph 4 of the Office Action, claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Geller et al.

Reconsideration is requested.

Geller et al. disclose in figures 10 to 12B a composite gear wheel construction, in which two gear wheels are "overlapped" onto one another to provide a composite gear wheel construction is a very complex construction, since the individual gear wheels thereof must be necessarily provided with splines defined by the inner cylindric surfaces of the gear wheel hubs. In addition, the individual gear wheels must be necessarily coupled through the interposition of springs. Moreover, in the coupled condition, the two partial gear wheels of this patent are arranged in an overlapping relationship, i.e. with each tooth of the first gear wheel overlapped on a corresponding tooth of the second gear wheel as is clearly shown in figures 12A and 12B of the patent.

The flank of the teeth of the Geller et al. gears do not abut against one another, but instead, the teeth of the individual gear wheels abut with their bottom and top portions respectively, in the above mentioned overlapping relationship. Thus, the Geller et al. composite gear wheel is constructed in a very different from the much more simple gear wheel construction pointed out by the Applicant in new claim 9. Applicant's gear wheel construction, has flank portions on the half teeth which abut onto one another and which, by turning a gear wheel portion with respect to the other, can be moved away to compensate the wear of the gear wheel teeth, which

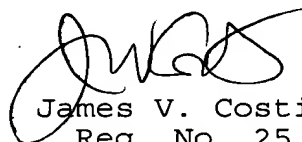
compensation would not be possible in the prior art composite gear wheel.

In this connection, Applicant wishes to point out that the specification has been amended on page 7, to point out that the surfaces 10 and 11 are flank outer surfaces as originally disclosed and shown in the drawings. For this reason, new main claim 9 does not contain new matter.

For these reasons, new claim 9 defines novel and non obvious subject matter.

An early and favorable Office Action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

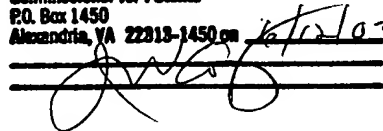


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IN THE SPECIFICATION

Rewrite the paragraph which begins at page 6, line 23, as follows:

Of the latter, only the surface 9 of the first gear wheel portion can be seen in the figures, and so that the flank outer surfaces 10 and 11, respectively, of the half teeth 4 and 5 are also facing one another.

Rewrite the paragraph which begins at page 7, line 3, as follows:

At the start, the gear wheel portions 2 and 3 are assembled mutually locked so as to cause the facing flank surfaces 10 and 11 of the half teeth 4 and 5 to contact one another, thereby each pair of half teeth 4 and 5 will form a tooth 12.

Rewrite the paragraph which begins at page 7, line 8, as follows:

In operation, each tooth 12 will be worn on its outer surfaces, thereby reducing the overall dimension, i.e. the distance between the flank outer surfaces.

Rewrite the paragraph which begins at page 7, line 12, as follows:

In order to hold this distance constant, the locking screws 6 are released, to allow the second gear wheel portion 3 to turn with respect to the first gear wheel portion 2, about the rotary axis of the gear wheel, thereby moving away the facing flank surfaces 10 and 11 of the half-teeth 4 and 5 to recover the desired distance.